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REVIEWS

Description gêométrique des Alpes Françaises, Annexe du Tome second. By P. HELBRONNER. Six panoramas dessinés et peints par l'auteur, 23 planches dans un carton in-folio. Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1921.

Gauthiers-Villars of Paris have, in this portfolio, put on the market colored panoramas of the French Alps which for both accuracy and beauty excel anything which has hitherto been produced. These panoramas have been drawn and colored as aquarelles by Paul Helbronner upon the basis of a trigonometric survey which this accomplished mapmaker, Alpinist, and artist has made. In the course of this work, he found it necessary to ascend with his instruments all the high and difficult peaks of the region. In all, the panoramas consist of twenty-three plates in color joined in six groups. The largest of the panoramas is a complete tour of the horizon from the summit of Mont Blanc and consists of thirteen plates making a picture 19 ft. 6 in. in length. Two others—Mont Blanc from the Mont-Maudit and Mont Blanc from the Col du Géant—consist each of three plates of the same size as the others. Under each of the panoramas is an outline-drawing from which each peak may be identified. The coloring of these remarkable panoramas is superb while faithful to nature, as will be testified to by anyone who has climbed in these regions. The publication of the portfolio marks an epoch in the history of reproduction in color. The panoramas are all well suited for framing.

W. H. HOBBS

Coal. By ELWOOD S. MOORE. New York: John Wiley & Sons, March, 1922.

This is primarily a volume for the mining student and the engineer who is in charge of coal-mining operations, but it should also be of interest to every geologist. It brings together the best of a varied literature and places it at the disposal of all in usable form.

Neither time nor space is wasted in the introductory chapter. From a brief history of the subject the author starts out energetically to discuss the megascopic and microscopic properties of coal and then passes naturally into a discussion of its chemical composition. The best and latest methods of sampling are given in sufficient detail to enable a man to follow them satisfactorily. A similar statement might be made regarding the methods of chemical analyses and, in later chapters, on mining methods.

It is unfortunate that with all our classifications of coal none seem to meet with general approval. Probably the best is that adopted by the Twelfth International Congress of Geologists, and which was originally developed by D. B. Dowling of the Canadian Geological Survey. The author favors a classification based upon more than two factors as best meeting the requirements, but admits the inadequacy of those now in use.

The origin of coal, through the transformation of vegetal matter accumulated in swamps, is discussed in considerable detail. The amazing rapidity of the metamorphic processes in any such accumulation is illustrated by the pebbles of coal occurring within the Coal Measures and the alteration of the upper end of a mine prop which had been subjected to high pressure for thirty years, during which time it also felt the effects of the heat from a fire in an adjacent part of the mine. The upper part of the prop and the cap wedge had a jet black color, a bright glossy luster, and conchoidal fracture. Evidently the intensity of the other factors may compensate for the lack of a large portion of the time element usually regarded as essential in the formation of the higher grades of coal.

A chapter is devoted to the vegetation of the coal periods and deals chiefly with the extinct forms. The author then takes up the structural conditions existing in coal seams, the location and determination of thickness of beds, and the value of coal lands. The latest mining methods and the preparation of the coal and coal products for the market are given due consideration. Finally a summary of the geology of the coal fields and the coal resources of the world completes the volume.

The book is adequately illustrated by well-chosen cuts, maps, and photographs. The plan of the text is admirable and the author handles his subject with good clear English, which is free from useless repetition. This has made it possible for him to get a remarkable amount of information into a single volume. Considering its size and scope, it is certainly one of the best texts on coal that has been published.

C. R. S.

Structure in Paleozoic Bituminous Coals. By REINHARDT THIESSEN, United States Bureau of Mines, Bulletin 117, Washington, 1920. Pp. xiii+296. Pls. CLX.

An extensive historical review of previous studies of woody structure in coal is followed by a detailed description of the technique of the